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**BOBBY L. RUSH**  
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October 28, 2009

The Honorable Arne Duncan  
Secretary of Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to respectfully urge you to immediately provide \$50 million from the discretionary funds in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for the Grants to Address Youth Violence and Related Issues for Persistently Dangerous Schools Program under the Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools. As the Department of Education (DOE) website declares, this vital program supports local education agency (LEA) projects that are designed to address violence and related issues, such as gang activity, in schools that have been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous."

At a time when school violence, in Chicago and cities nationwide, is escalating and the country is focused on addressing this deadly issue, it is imperative that we provide the resources for schools to effectively deal with this urgent problem. Currently, in FY09 the youth violence program has zero funding, which is the same amount it was funded in FY06 (\$0) and FY08 (\$0). In FY07, this critical program was funded at a paltry \$8.5 million, and it is currently scheduled to receive zero funding in FY10.

We cannot afford to, effectively, cut this program from the DOE at a time when it is most needed. Providing \$50 million immediately to the program would allow eligible LEAs to propose and implement activities that address violence, and related issues, in schools that are most at risk.

As you so eloquently stated in your recent remarks in Chicago, *"When kids are fearful they can't learn – and if they can't learn then we are all at risk because our future depends on the quality of education we give our children."*

We must make sure we give our children a chance and provide schools with the resources they need to address this grave problem head on.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bobby L. Rush".

Bobby L. Rush  
Member of Congress